

247
Africa-west

MacCann, Robt.



Handwritten: MacCann
Quadrangle



Compiled 1896.

PRICE ONE PENNY

QUA IBOE.

AN ACCOUNT OF MISSION WORK ON
THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA.

COMPILED BY

ROBERT McCANN.



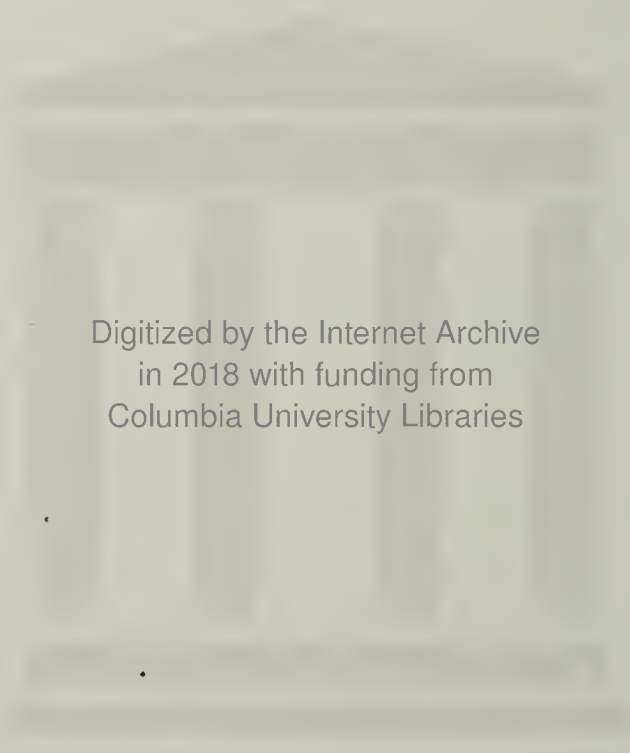
SECOND EDITION.



BELFAST :

WM. STRAIN & SONS. PRINTERS

1896.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Columbia University Libraries

QUA IBOE MISSION.



Council :

D. A. BLACK.	ROBERT McCANN.
S. D. BELL.	SAMUEL NICHOLL.
S. J. BROOMFIELD.	JAMES PRYDE.
W. H. CALVERT.	JOHN E. PIM.
D. C. HAMILTON.	W. R. SLOAN.
J. P. HAY.	R. M. STEELE.
A. W. VANCE.	

Referees :

Rev. JAS. CREGAN, Belfast.	Rev. H. GRATTAN GUINNESS,
Rev. HENRY MONTGOMERY,	D.D., London.
Belfast.	D. J. FINDLAY, Glasgow.
Rev. CHAS. INWOOD, Belfast,	W. A. BOYD, Dublin.
A. GORDON, J.P., Kilkeel.	R. WILKINSON, J.P. Dublin.
R. M'COWEN, J.P., Tralee.	E. BEALE, Clonmel.
J. C. NEWSOM, Cork.	ARTHUR PIM, Hillsborough.
ROBERT ANDERSON, Belfast.	

Hon. Treasurer :

WILLIAM STRAIN, Windsor Park, Belfast.

Hon. Secretaries :

JAMES HAMILTON, Balmoral, Belfast.
H. B. NIBLOCK 36, Salisbury Street, Belfast.

Missionaries :

Mr. and Mrs. S. A. BILL.	Mr. and Mrs. A. BAILIE.
JOHN KIRK.	

Native Teachers :

DAVID EKON.	JOHN EWAINAN.
JOHN MFON.	



MAP of WEST COAST OF AFRICA, the shaded portion showing the district under the influence of this Mission.

Qua Iboe Mission,

WEST AFRICAN COAST.

WHERE IS QUA IBOE?

A question frequently asked on hearing for the first time of this Mission. A glance at the accompanying map will show the exact position of this district on the

WEST COAST OF AFRICA.

It lies between the Bonny and Opobo rivers on one side, and Old Calabar on the other, thirty miles west of the mouth of the Old Calabar river, and is one of the districts now forming the new Niger Coast Protectorate.

The Qua Iboe (pronounced Kwâ Ebó) river running through this district is supposed to be about 200 miles in length, but only the first seventy miles have as yet been explored by Europeans. There are very many towns and villages built all along its banks. Those situated near the mouth of the river are inhabited by a tribe named the

IBUNOS.

Further up the river live the Ekets, and higher still the Ibibioes. The total population of the district is about half a million, and the chief exports are palm oil and palm kernels.

PREPARATION.

During the years 1874-5 a great religious awakening took place in Belfast, and spread over a large section of the North of Ireland. This increased interest in religious matters was largely the result of the visit of

MESSRS. MOODY AND SANKEY

to Belfast in 1874. This event led to the formation of a branch of the Young Men's Christian Association in Mountpottinger. Within this organisation were gathered many of the earnest Christian men of the district, and not a few of those who had been influenced by the special meetings. The

SUNDAY MORNING PRAYER MEETING

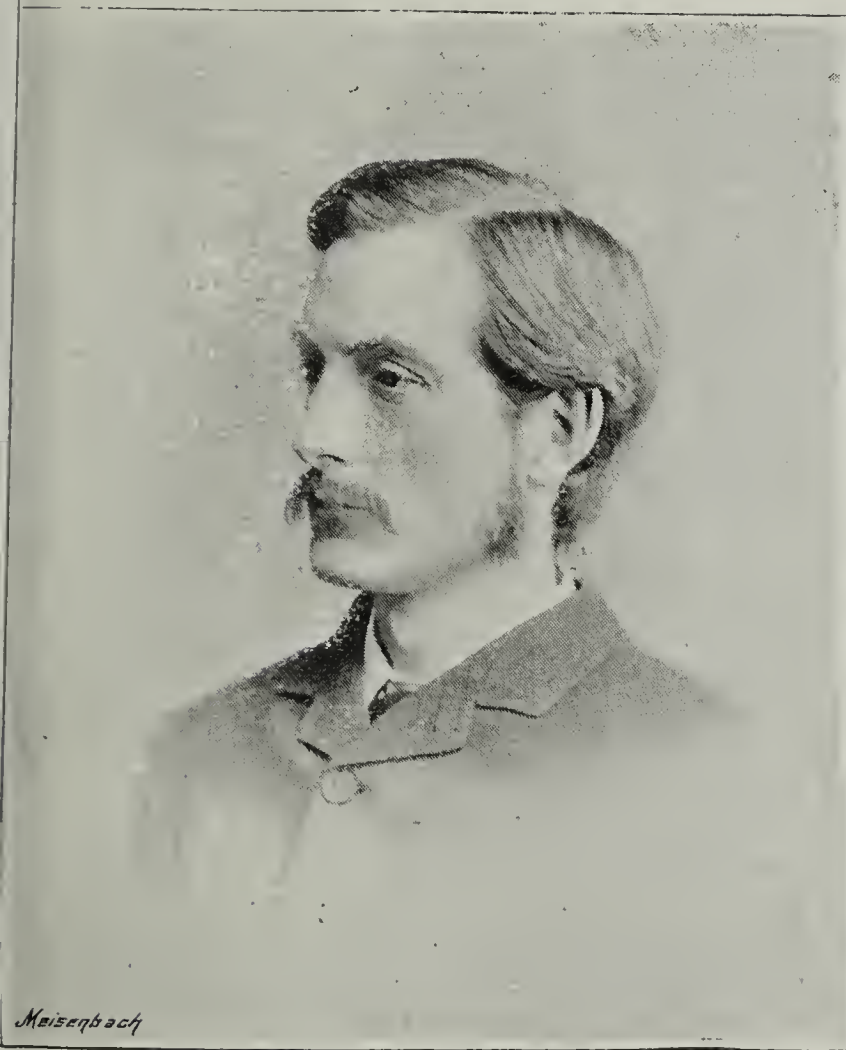
at the Y.M.C.A. became the rendezvous of a number of the more earnest young men, and some of these were also in attendance at the communicants' class of the First Ballymacarrett Presbyterian Church, taught by the Rev. John Meneely, D.D. This double bond of union led to the formation of a band of workers.

MR. JOHN M'KITTRICK

had charge of a Cottage Meeting in Island Street, Ballymacarrett, in which work he was assisted by Messrs. Samuel Morrison and Robert M. Steele. The numbers attending the meeting so overcrowded the room that a move was made to an old tumble-down house in

CLUB ROW,

which had previously been used as a Mission



JOHN M'KITTRICK.

Room, but had been closed during an epidemic of fever in the district. A Sunday evening Gospel Meeting, Week night Bible Class, Evangelistic Meetings and Sunday School were organised. The Belfast Town Mission encouraged the work, and paid the rent of the premises.

At this juncture the CLAIMS OF THE HEATHEN world began to present themselves to some members of the little band, and the leader, Mr. John M'Kittrick, entered the Training College of Dr. H. Grattan Guinness, Harley House, London. Mr. M'Kittrick afterwards volunteered for the Congo, and eventually became the noble pioneer of the

CONGO BALOLO MISSION,

and laid down his life for the service of the Gospel in Africa.

On Mr. M'Kittrick's departure from Belfast the work of the Mission band was reorganised, and Messrs. Bill and Bailie taken into partnership.

The work at Club Row had now out-grown the accommodation the rooms provided, and a plan suggested itself to the workers of

BUILDING A MISSION HALL

in the district. Their first idea was to build a wooden shed, but as the collection of the funds proceeded the scheme enlarged. At this time

MR. SAMUEL MORRISON

was called to another sphere of work, and now

he is labouring in the English Presbyterian Church, at Southampton.

MR. SAMUEL A. BILL filled the niche vacated by Mr. Morrison, and the officials of the Mission band were—Chairman of Committee, Robert M. Steele; Secretary, Samuel A. Bill; Treasurer, A. Bailie.

During this period Messrs. Bill and Bailie frequently resorted to Club Row Room to seek guidance regarding their duty toward the Foreign Mission Field and the Master's command. Through hearing a lecture by the

REV. WM. ROGERS, LL.D. (WHITEABBEY), on "A Glimpse at the Map of the World," Mr. Bill was led to consecrate his life to Foreign Mission Work, and Mr. A. Bailie was led to a similar decision by reading

"THE LIFE OF JOHN HUNT,"

a missionary to the Fiji Islands, a book obtained from the lending library of the local Y.M.C.A.

The funds for building the Mission Hall came in rapidly, and a neat hall was erected in Island Street at a cost of £212, the entire amount being collected by the workers of Club Row Room. For four years Mr. Bill laboured as a volunteer in this mission. During this time the missionary enthusiasm grew stronger and stronger. Difficulties which had previously proved formidable barriers were now removed, the way opened, and in 1886 Mr. Bill entered Harley House, where he was followed by Mr. Bailie one year afterwards.



MR. S. A. BILL.

FOREIGN SERVICE.

First Year.

During Mr. Bill's college course an appeal for a Missionary came to Harley House from the

IBUNO CHIEFS AT QUA IBOE, through Mrs. Ross and Mr. F. Foster, of Old Calabar. Dr. Guinness read the call before the assembled students, and asked for a volunteer. Qua Iboe was an unknown land; no one there had heard of the district before. The enthusiasm which had overcome so many difficulties prompted Mr. Bill to offer himself for a work the most difficult and dangerous any man can undertake. After a few months spent in preparation for his departure, he

SAILED FOR AFRICA

about the close of 1887, with the view of establishing a self-supporting Mission at Qua Iboe.

This was found to be practically impossible. The natives obtain their livelihood by fishing and bartering the fish to the up-country folk for vegetables and other food, and in trading a monopoly had already been given to one company by an arrangement with the native chiefs of the district.

When Mr. Bill became aware of these facts, he sent an appeal to the mission band at Island Street, asking that a

MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION

should be formed, and that Mr. James Ferguson should be appointed Secretary, and urging them to raise at least £25 per year. In the meantime Dr. and Mrs. Guinness, who had provided Mr. Bill's outfit and passage money, continued to send supplies to the mission field.

Second Year.

Even during the first twelve months such tokens of

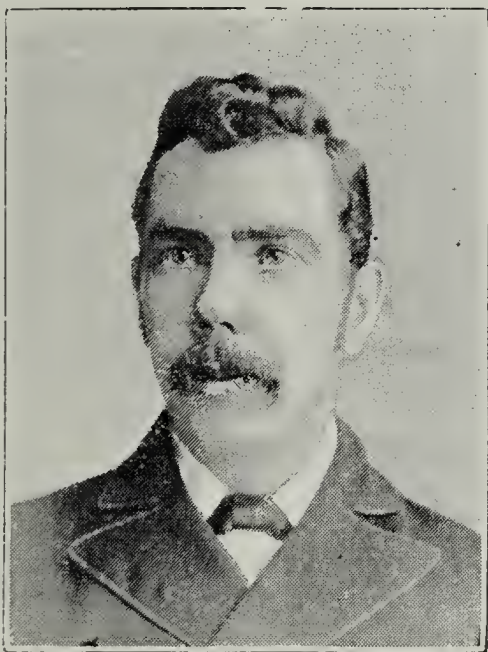
GOD'S GRACIOUS FAVOUR

and blessing were manifested that Mr. Bill was unable to cope with the work single-handed, and an appeal was sent to Harley House for

AN ADDITIONAL LABOURER.

Mr. Bailie, his old friend and co-worker, responded. His outfit was provided by Dr. and Mrs. Guinness. Before Mr. Bailie sailed for Africa he visited Belfast to take leave of his friends, and, taking advantage of his presence and the interest aroused by his going forth to the "regions beyond," the Missionary Association, suggested by Mr. Bill, was organised, with Mr. Ferguson as Secretary. Its object was to create interest in and raise funds for the support of the work at Qua Iboe. They did not guarantee to raise the amount asked (£25), but promised to

do all that was in their power. The amount raised by the auxiliary during its first year was £75, out of which supplies were sent as they were required.



MR. A. BAILIE.

Third Year.

During the years 1888 and 1889

DR. AND MRS. GUINNESS

gave considerable financial help to the Mission.
The pressing needs of the rapidly-extending

Congo Balolo Mission demanded the centralization of all the efforts of the directorate upon that Mission, besides, the funds sent to Qua Iboe were not given in accordance with the established rules of the institution, viz., that no missionaries be supported after their arrival in the field they have chosen, the exception in this case being made on account of the exceedingly interesting and successful character of the work. Under these circumstances, early in 1890 information was conveyed to Messrs. Bill and Bailie that Dr. and Mrs. Guinness would no longer be responsible for their support at Qua Iboe, but would gladly transfer them as workers to the Congo Balolo Mission.

The missionaries replied that, as God had blessed their efforts to the

CONVERSION OF NINE NATIVES,
and in other ways showed that the Gospel had wrought a wonderful change on the lives and conduct of those within reach of the Mission station, He would, if it were His will that they should remain there, provide the

NECESSARY FUNDS.

They had therefore resolved to remain at Qua Iboe so long as God would provide them with their daily bread.

During the second year of the Qua Iboe Missionary Association the sum of £85 was collected. This proved barely sufficient for even their daily bread.

Fourth Year.

After three years absence Mr. Bill returned from Africa to Ireland, to recruit his failing health and to tell the story of the work which, by God's blessing, he had been enabled to accomplish.

DAVID EKON,

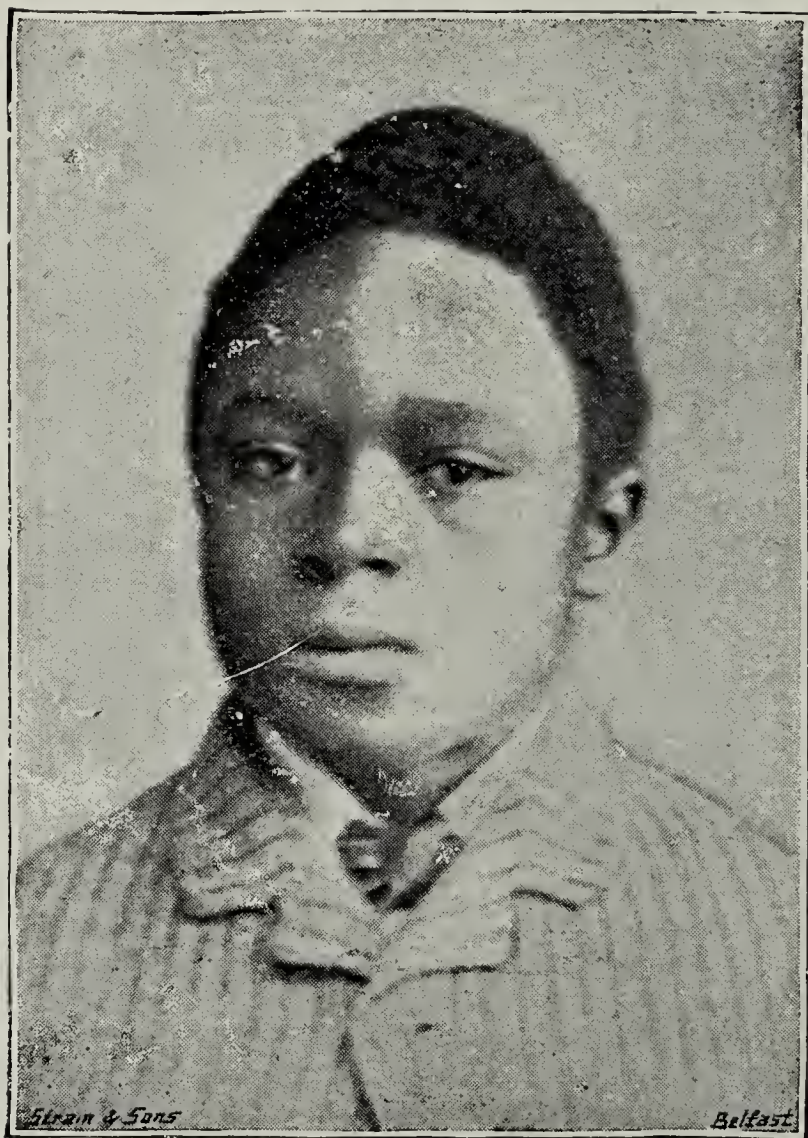
who accompanied him, was a living witness of the power of the Gospel to turn the hearts of men from darkness to light. David was amongst the first-fruits of the Mission. He had been a house-boy in the Mission home for nearly three years, and had shown great eagerness to acquire knowledge, and in order that Mr. Bill might keep in touch with the Efik tongue David was brought to Britain.

AWAKENED INTEREST.

The triumphs of the Cross, as related by Mr. Bill in his own simple and straightforward manner, aroused much enthusiasm, and extensively widened the circle of friends interested in this long neglected and far away corner of the Dark Continent.

COUNCIL APPOINTED.

After much prayer and consultation a small council was formed to assist in the administration of the affairs of the Mission, to raise funds, and to disburse any gifts that might be sent in by the Lord's people. Mr. David C. Hamilton was appointed hon. secretary, and Mr. William Strain hon. treasurer.



DAVID EKON (NATIVE TEACHER).

AUXILIARIES.

As a result of the deputation work, auxiliaries were formed in different parts of the country. These societies, consisting of a number of collectors, to whom boxes were supplied, and usually managed by a secretary, have been the main support of the Mission ; and the prosperity of the financial department very much depends on their growth and success.

The Mountpottinger Auxiliary, which began this good work, is represented on the Council, and still continues to give very practical help to the undertaking. Its members are rejoiced to know that God has been so gracious as to establish on a permanent basis the work begun in much fear and faith.

REMARKABLE AGREEMENT.

Mr. Bailie, who was alone, carried on the work at Ibuno during this year, the most notable event of which was the signing of a compact by the native chiefs of the district resolving to abolish the horrible practice of putting to death all twin children.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

The numbers in fellowship with the Church had now increased to between 35 and 40, and amongst them were some notable personages.

CHIEF EGBO EGBO

for long had seemed interested in the message of love, and had been a most regular attendant

at the church. At last he came to the missionaries and desired baptism, but they told him "No ; we cannot baptize you while you have twelve wives, and continue to trade in gin and rum." He was quite willing to give up his wives and his trade in slaves, but the "drink business " was a different matter, for that meant giving up about half his living. For a long time he hesitated, but Christ conquered, and he gave up all, and accepted Jesus as his Saviour.

He pensioned off eleven of his wives. Those who had homes returned to them, and for the others he built good houses. Several of these wives have since been converted and re-married. Since then Egbo Egbo has led a most consistent Christian life, and he has been a strong pillar in the native Church, willing at all times to render what aid and help he can give with a cheerful hand.

MRS. BILL.

During Mr. Bill's sojourn in Ireland he was married to Miss Gracie Kerr, of Belfast, trained for mission work in Doric Lodge, London.

Fifth Year.

After one year's furlough Mr. Bill returned to Qua Iboe, accompanied by Mrs. Bill and David Ekon, and upon their arrival Mr. Bailie returned to the home land. A remarkable interposition of Providence kept him from obtaining



MRS. S. A. BILL.

a passage on a ship which was wrecked on the home journey.

While

DAVID EKON

was in Belfast he made the most of the opportunity then afforded him of improving his education. He studied diligently and successfully, and was well qualified on his return to take up the position which had been the goal of his desires, that of teacher and evangelist amongst his own people. Soon after his home-coming he was appointed

FIRST NATIVE TEACHER

in Qua Iboe. We have great reason to be thankful that so early in the history of the work God raised up and qualified one so successful and helpful as David has been. He first acted as day-school teacher and interpreter, then he commenced preaching on Sundays, and during a serious illness of Mr. Bill's more responsibility was thrown upon his shoulders, and for a time he carried on the services on both week days and Sundays. God has abundantly owned his labours, and there are not a few whom he can claim as his children in the Gospel.

THE SAW MILL.

The necessity of establishing an industrial branch, for the purpose of giving suitable employment to the native Christians connected with the Mission, had long been a question of anxious



THREE NATIVE (QUA IBOE) GIRLS.

thought to the missionaries. A systematic training in

SKILLED LABOUR

for a country like Africa must always be considered an important part of Christian teaching. A saw mill seemed the most suitable industry for the district, and that most likely to be of service to the Mission. Standing timber was plentiful all along the river, and yet for want of a steam saw mill all wood for building purposes required to be imported from England.

The Mission had now in view the

ERECTION OF BUILDINGS,

both at Ibuno and at the new station which it was intended shortly to open up the river. No stone of any kind being found at Ibuno, all the buildings must be erected of wood, and much money could be saved if only the wood could be sawn at Qua Iboe. Before Mr. Bill left for Africa he had frequently spoken in public about the desirability of having such a mill, and a sum of over £80 had been contributed towards its purchase. Afterwards the total amount required was given, and the engine, steam boiler, and saws were sent out during this year.

The usual

PREACHING AND TEACHING SERVICES

were carried on without intermission, one of the most interesting and useful being the

ENQUIRERS' CLASS,

held from week to week, where those who

expressed a desire to "follow God" were taught more fully the way of salvation. During the year several were baptized.

MR. BAILIE,
during his stay in Ireland, visited the auxiliaries,



MRS. BAILIE.

and addressed meetings, arousing much fresh interest in the work at home. He was married to Miss Martha M'Keown, of Belfast, who studied at Doric Lodge, in London.

Sixth Year.

MR. AND MRS. BAILIE

went out to Africa, and immediately on their arrival the missionaries set about getting material for the

NEW STATION,

which Mr. Bailie was to occupy up the river. Considerable time was spent in felling trees and cutting them into suitable lengths. The selection of a good centre was a point of prime importance, and at last a position was chosen amongst the

IBIBIOES OF OKAT,

twenty miles up river from Ibuno. A plot of ground was bought from the natives, and was cleared by F. D. Holder, Esq., a coffee planter of the district, free of expense to the Mission. The timber was also carried from Ibuno to Okat by the boats of the African Association free of charge. Sickness amongst the members of the little band

RETARDED THE BUILDING

of the station, but before the rainy season the posts and roof were erected and two rooms boarded up, in which Mr. and Mrs. Bailie lived, while the former and John Ewainan carried on the building operations. From the start a very unpleasant characteristic of the Ibibioes began to manifest itself—their thieving propensities standing out in striking

contrast to the honesty of the Ibuno people. Bundles of timber and sheets of corrugated iron began to disappear in the most mysterious manner, provisions and tools were missing, so that it was necessary to combine

WATCHING WITH WORKING,

thus increasing the difficulties of labour.

The Okats are an ingenious people, industrious farmers, clever smiths; and they have a knowledge of a rude kind of carpentry. They are not anxious to have a missionary amongst them; and why a white man should come to live in their country except for pecuniary gain was to them incomprehensible, the only reason which made them friendly being the tangible fact that the missionaries would

PROVIDE MEDICINE,

and the hope, that they may "dash" them (make presents). Even after speaking for half an hour, trying to convince them of their sinfulness and need of a Saviour, their only response will be, "What are you going to give us?"

Mention has already been made of

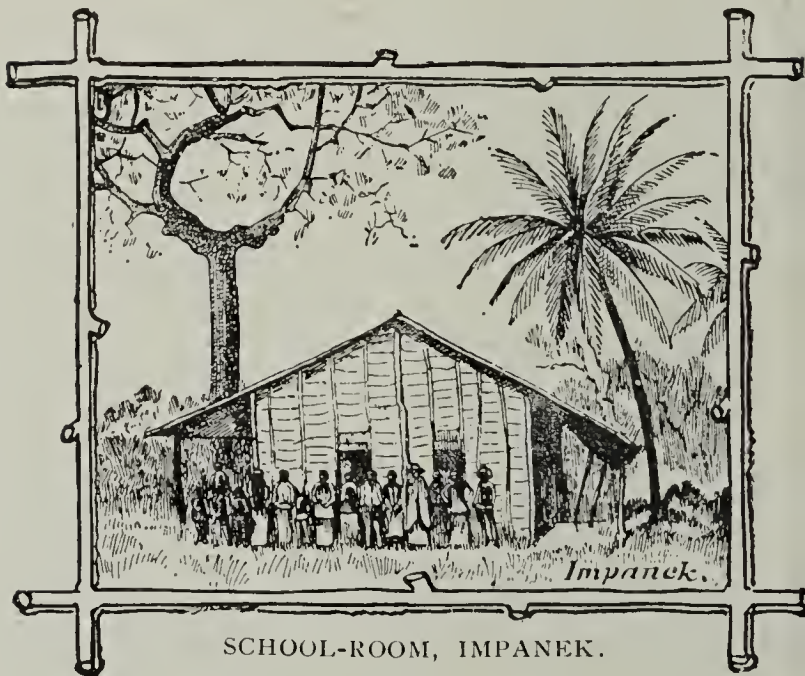
JOHN EWAINAN,

the young man who, on Mr. Bailie's return, was appointed as native teacher, to accompany him to the new station, and assist in the building operations. John is a native of Impanek, and regularly attended the school Mr. Bailie

held there. He was one of the very first of that town to

“FOLLOW GOD ;”

but his father was opposed to his becoming a Christian, which kept him from being baptized



SCHOOL-ROOM, IMPANEK.

for some time. On going up to Okat he laboured harder than natives usually care to do, at the heavy work of felling timber, &c., and also studied diligently, making steady progress. He often visited from Okat the

OUTLYING TOWNS,

to make known there the truths of the Gospel

to a people who were *not* thirsting to hear it, and who treated the messenger with anything but respect. He has a quiet, steady, persevering character, and promises to be a most efficient helper. A warm friend of the Mission provides his support.

THE SAW MILL

at Ibuno was fitted up and temporary buildings of native matting erected, and the work of cutting timber commenced.

Previous to this no native could be convinced of the possibility of cutting large trees into boards, and they delayed all preparation for felling trees for church-building, until the saw was actually at work.

DAVID EKON

continued his routine work of teaching and preaching with much success, but the missionaries longed and prayed to see in his heart and life indications that he was moved by more ardent desires to spread the light of life amongst his fellow-countrymen. David was told of the work that was being done at home by many young men—

VOLUNTARY WORK—

after their day's ordinary labour was finished. He soon after announced his intention of starting meetings in the town, to be held every evening, but in a different court-yard each day. Other young men—John Ewainan, Daniel Mfon, Thomas Akpan, Akpan Ekan, Ebem,

Atifat, Namso, and John Mfon—followed his example, and often several of these services would be going on at the same hour. Many were thus brought under the daily influence of the Gospel who had hitherto heard it only at lengthened intervals. Not a few of those who have recently joined the Church can date the first turning of their thoughts Zionward to the influence exerted by these court-yard meetings.

During the year all the missionaries were more or less indisposed. Mrs. Bill and Mrs. Bailie were

DANGEROUSLY ILL.

Both recovered, but the state of Mrs. Bill's health necessitated an immediate return home. She brought with her Mary Egbo Egbo, a daughter of Chief Egbo Egbo. When

MRS. BILL

had somewhat recruited her health at home she visited the various auxiliaries, and formed several new ones. These visits were the means of stirring up much interest.

The rapid development of the work at the close of this year called for the appointment of

ADDITIONAL NATIVE HELP.

From amongst those available, John Mfon was chosen, and his support was provided by another friend of the Mission.

JOHN MFON'S

field of labour is Impanek. The old school-room having fallen, he set about getting a new



MARY EGBO EGBO.

one built. Much of the work of erection was done by the teacher and the children attending the school, so that the total cost of the

NEW SCHOOLROOM,

a building 40ft. by 25ft., was only about £3. John is also responsible for the Sunday service at Ibuut Inyan.

NATIVE TEACHERS.

To support an unmarried native teacher costs from £16 to £20 per annum, and a married teacher's salary is from £25 to £30, according to years of service. These salaries are on a somewhat higher scale than is necessary on other mission fields, but not more than the cost of living demands, and much less than the same stamp of workers are paid by the traders on the West Coast, and even less than could be earned at the native work of fishing or trading. A young man who devotes himself to mission work requires to exercise a considerable amount of self-sacrifice.

MORE WANTED.

This agency is capable of still further extension, and if individuals or auxiliaries feel led to assist in this department we would be glad to supply further information. Why should not some of the large auxiliaries support their own native teacher?

Seventh Year.

INDUSTRIAL BRANCH.

The saw mill now being successfully erected and at work, the missionaries were giving much thought to the important question as to how best to utilize it as an agency for

TRAINING THE NATIVES,

and of improving the social condition of the district. The money required to commence an

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL

for training the boys in carpentry was such a considerable sum that it was questionable whether the Mission should incur such a large additional expenditure. At this juncture, when Mr. Bill was accompanying Mrs. Bill on her homeward journey as far as Accra, he met on board the steamer the British Consul-General,

SIR CLAUDE MACDONALD.

During the course of a conversation he generously offered on behalf of the Protectorate Government to assist financially and otherwise the establishment and maintenance of an industrial branch at Qua Iboe. After lengthened negotiations and a visit from the

ACTING CONSUL-GENERAL,

R. Moore, Esq., a scheme was finally agreed upon as follows :—



Strain & Son

THE SAWMILL.

THE SCHEME.

The school must have at least six boys and not more than twelve in training at carpentry, each boy to have a term of not less than three years, and they must devote a portion of their time to the study of English. Eight pounds per annum to be allowed for each boy's clothing and board ; thirty pounds per year towards wear and tear of saw mill and upkeep of buildings ; also grants of £25 for training tools and £50 to erect workshops and dwelling-houses for the boys. At the expiration of each boy's term five pounds will be given to provide him with tools. The school to be under Government inspection, and full accounts of all expenditure to be kept at the station and to be periodically examined by a Government official.

In accordance with these conditions

THE SCHOOL WAS OPENED

with seven boys. During the remaining portion of the year they were engaged in erecting temporary buildings in which to work, making benches and preparing material for the roof of the new church. All this involved considerable labour, as all the wood had to be felled in the bush, cut into lengths, hauled to the river, floated down the stream, drawn to the mill, and cut into planks. For this work and much more the services of the apprentices were available, and proved to be of the greatest value. They have assisted materially in the erection of the new church and other Mission buildings.

OKAT.

The new mission-house, now nearly finished, cost the Mission about £120. The same house built of wood brought from England would have cost double that sum. As time allows the building will gradually be completed, and will be well worth

£500.

This, however, is only the means to an end, and the missionary, now being housed, is free to devote more of his time to preaching work. Much of the work this year was

ITINERATING

in its character. First of all the natives mistrust a stranger. They naturally think he has some personal benefit to gain by coming to live amongst them. They clearly see that his teaching is directly opposed to their most cherished

PRACTICES AND BELIEFS.

Before even his word will have weight with them he must live a life amongst them of such consistency as will put to flight all their suspicions. By kindness to them in sickness and in many ways helping them in their difficulties he must

WIN THEIR HEARTS,

at least in some measure, before he can gain their ears. At the same time the Gospel he preaches has a wonderful influence in finding out a man's shortcomings, and, fitting exactly



STEVENSON & BOYD

ENGINE-HOUSE OF SAWMILL.

as it does into his needs, it appeals to him with marvellous power.

Not only do the natives distrust the missionary, but they

DISTRUST ONE ANOTHER.

In many of the adjacent villages chiefs reside who could provide places suitable for holding meetings, but such petty jealousies prevail that all who might be prevented from coming together in one court-yard. "If the white man goes to one man's yard why should he not come to mine," they say. To meet this difficulty Mr. Bailie has erected

A BUILDING

of mud and wattle near to his own house, and in this the school is held, and the people meet to hear God's Word.

COFFEE PLANTING.

In order to get a good healthy site for the Mission House a much larger plot of ground had to be bought than was actually necessary for building purposes, and in order to maintain the station in a proper sanitary condition this ground must be kept cleared. By the expenditure of a small additional sum coffee trees could be planted, the produce of which would eventually become a

SOURCE OF INCOME

to the Mission. A grant of £20 was made by the Council, and

GOVERNMENT AID



COFFEE PLANTING.



MR. JOHN KIRK.

was given to the extent of one manilla (one penny and one-eighth) per year for each tree until bearing. The first batch of plants was also obtained from the Government, but now nurseries for young coffee plants have been made, and from these a sufficient supply for the future will be grown. Already

3,000 COFFEE TREES

have been planted, and they are growing vigorously. These will yield coffee berries in about four years, and after that the plantation will give substantial help towards the support of the station as well as adding to the beauty and sanitation of the place.

All these schemes have entailed a vast amount of

EXTRA WORK

to Mr. Bailie, but he has undertaken it gladly. By these means he has also been brought into contact with large numbers of the young men of the district who were working under him, and day by day they have heard the Word of God every man in his own tongue.

At the close of the seventh year the staff of European missionaries was increased by the arrival of

MR. JOHN KIRK.

He was a member of the City of Belfast Y.M.C.A., and a worker in connection with one of the city churches, but his interest in Christian work had been awakened before he

left his native town, Gilford, County Down. Mr. Kirk has been associated with Mr. Bill in the work at Ibuno. The practical knowledge he possesses has proved of immense service in assisting to train the boys in the industrial branch, and he has made some advance in the study of Efik.

CHURCH PROGRESS.

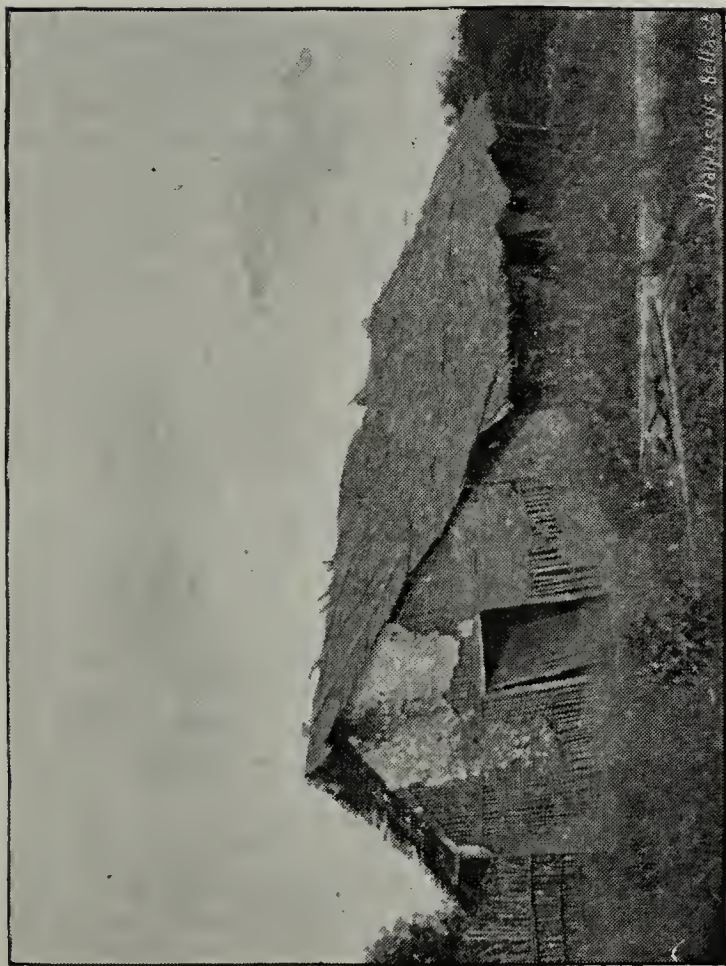
The religious services have been well maintained, and members from the enquirers' class on two separate occasions were baptized, numbering in all 16. This brought the Church membership up to 50.

Church Building.

During the first twelve months of the Mission's existence, and previous to any of the natives being baptized, the ground was cleared, and a church building of mud and wattle, with a palm leaf roof, was erected by the natives. This building served for six years as church and schoolroom, but at last became so dilapidated as to be unsafe for meetings.

NEW CHURCH.

For two years the members of the church had been making spasmodic efforts to prepare for the erection of a new church. The arrival of the saw mill was the signal for a new departure, and forthwith they went into the bush to fell the timber necessary for the church building, and a fund was started to purchase the iron for the roof and other necessary materials.



OLD DILAPIDATED CHURCH.

VOLUNTARY LABOUR.

Labour was given gratuitously, the men and boys felling, hauling, and cutting the timber, while the women were engaged in cutting and carrying the wood used for fuel at the saw mill, a most difficult and important part of the work. The building measures 60 feet by 30 feet, and in the tower is swung a fine bell, which summons the people to the services on Sundays and week days, and calls the children to day school, this being very necessary where clocks are so scarce as at Qua Iboe.

The building operations occupied the greater portion of a year. The whole expenses, in addition to the labour given voluntarily, amounted to over

FIFTY POUNDS.

This amount was given by the free-will offerings of the church members, a very considerable sum when all the circumstances are considered. One of the most interesting features of the story is connected with the history of the site upon which the new church stands. Once it was the site of the

PRINCIPAL "JU JU" (IDOL) HOUSE of the town of Ubarekan. The decline of the house commenced with the first preaching of the Gospel in Ibuno, and although repeated efforts were made to rebuild the edifice, it eventually fell into decay, and at the request of the missionaries the people deeded over to the Mission



THE OLD IDOL HOUSE.

this ground as a site for the new church and the new Mission premises yet to be erected.

Eighth Year.

INDUSTRIAL BRANCH.

This department has more than realised the brightest hopes the missionaries had formed concerning it. All the articled apprentices have remained steadily at work, and two additional boys have enlisted, so that now we have

NINE BOYS IN TRAINING

in the workshop. During the year timber was prepared for Okat Mission House. The building of the church occupied much time, and new permanent wooden buildings were erected for the boiler, engine, and saw; a teacher's house was also built near the church.

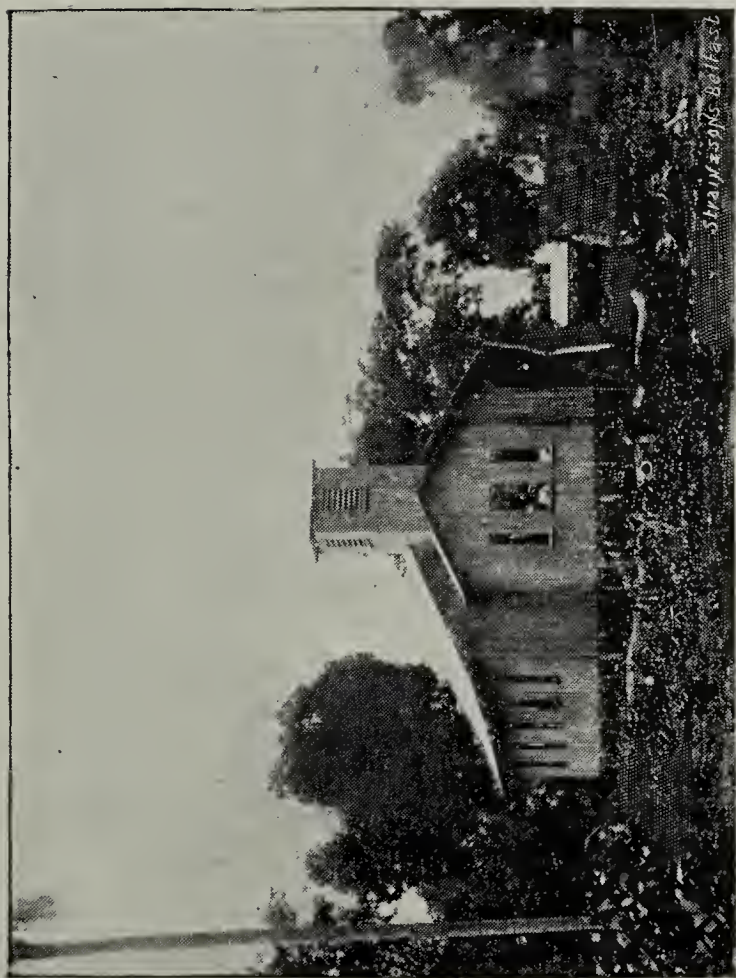
The saw mill has been

A POTENT FACTOR

in the work, and the missionaries say that it is only those resident on the spot who can realise the effect its introduction has had upon the natives in quickening them to renewed effort. When we add the

MORAL INFLUENCE

to the service the industrial branch has rendered



NEW CHURCH.

by the erection of the following buildings—Mission house at Okat, church at Ibuno, engine and boiler house, saw house and native teacher's house—we can form some estimate of its value to the mission.

All this work has been a heavy additional burden upon the shoulders of the missionaries, but an immense saving to the finances of the Mission. As a compensating feature, the health of the missionaries has been fairly good, and this, no doubt, is in some measure due to the increased activity involved in performing so much manual labour.

The most interesting event of the year was the

		DAVID EKON
MARRIAGE OF	}	TO
		MARY EGBO EGBO.

Both had been to England, and, therefore, had much in common, and it was not strange they should be drawn to one another, and led to cast together their lot in life. The usual custom of purchasing a wife was for the first time in Ibuno abolished, and only

PRESENTS WERE SENT

by David to Mary's mother—yam, fish, money, and cloth. She, in return, sent an immense pot of food, cooked and ready for use, which

was partaken of by David and his friends. After the wedding ceremony in the church,

A GREAT FEAST

was held, in which a large number of the people around were invited to participate. Now David and his wife are comfortably settled in the new teacher's house, at which David worked energetically when it was being built, and both of them are doing all in their power to make their

HOME AS NEAT AND COMFORTABLE

as possible, after the style of some of the small houses they saw in Ireland.

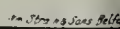
MR. BILL'S RETURN.

After a stay of four years—Mr. Bill's second term in Africa—he has returned home, and is actively engaged once more in spreading information concerning the advance of God's Kingdom at Qua Iboe.

We would here acknowledge the great kindness of A. L. Jones, Esq., of Messrs. Elder, Dempster & Co., ship owners, Liverpool, in arranging passages at low rates for the missionaries, and in giving free passes to the native boys and Mary.

BAPTISMS.

Thirteen additional members were received into the Church before Mr. Bill's departure;



. MAP OF RIVER.

most of these were women, some of them very old women, who had been attending the inquirers' class for periods of from one to five years. They had not been admitted to fellowship earlier because they did not possess much knowledge of Divine things ; it was felt, however, that as their lives were thoroughly consistent, and as they understood clearly the simple plan of salvation, and were desirous to profess their faith in the Lord Jesus, they should not be kept back any longer.

Towards the close of the year the Council of the Mission learned with much regret they were to lose the services of their esteemed hon. sec., Mr. D. C. Hamilton, who had given so much self-denying earnest labour to the mission, as he was about to proceed to the Foreign Mission field. Messrs. Jas. Hamilton and H. B. Niblock, two members of the Council, were appointed joint hon. secs.

General Situation.

Entering the Qua Iboe River, four miles from the Mission station, a dangerous sand bar exists, upon which many vessels have been wrecked. The broken hulls of three steamers lie stranded upon its banks.

TOWNS.

The towns at the mouth of the river are chiefly situated upon the east or left bank. The

first of these is Impanek, built a short distance up a small creek opening off the river. Next in order and at the point of another creek is the small town of New Ikorotak, then follow in succession Mission Town, Ubarekan, Abon's Town, and Ibuut Inyan.

MISSION TOWN,

the central point of our operations, has a population of about 150 souls, and consists of a cluster of houses built around the Mission premises, chiefly those of refugees and their families who have fled thither for safety. When the section of land on which the Mission premises were built was given to the Mission by the people of Ibuno it was arranged that those fleeing from charges of witchcraft or from personal danger of any kind should be safe from molestation on this parcel of land until the charges made were inquired into, an agreement which all along has been honourably adhered to.

IMPANEK,

or Big Town, is distant about twenty-five minutes' pull in a canoe from the Mission station, and has a population of about 800. There Mr. Bailie conducted a day school during the first three years of his residence in Africa. This work is now carried on by John Mfon, one of the native teachers. A Sunday service is conducted by David Ekon, assisted by John Mfon, with an average attendance of about sixty.

UBAREKAN,

being nearest to Mission Town, and also having direct land communication, has been brought into closer touch with the missionaries. There the bulk of the Church members reside and the chief part of our aggressive work is carried on—viz., Sunday services and Sunday school, day school and yard (court-yard) meetings.

IBUUT INYAN

has a Sunday service held in the schoolroom by John Mfon.

Typical Cases.

A missionary's life has its encouragements and discouragements, and it might be interesting to state briefly a typical case representing each of these two features.

Obio Emana

was an Ibo woman of a tribe 200 miles north of Ibuno, sold to Egbo Egbo as a slave. She afterwards became one of his wives. A capable and clever trader, she did much to increase her husband's fortunes. At Egbo Egbo's conversion she was one of the

DISCARDED WIVES,

but shortly afterwards she, too, professed conversion, and was finally remarried to a Christian named Ibök. She was a woman of a

FIERY TEMPER

and headstrong disposition, and when under



OBLO EMANA.

the sway of her passions words were exchanged and acts performed that made the missionaries very doubtful whether she had ever been converted. But "old things" passed away, and in disputes that arose afterwards, sometimes through no fault of her own, but more frequently arising from the evil deeds of other days, she showed such

MEEKNESS AND GENTLENESS

as proved her to be possessed of the spirit of Jesus. After living for a time a woman of faith and prayer, she was called home at the close of a lingering attack of fever, having a bright hope through faith in Jesus until the very last.

Okana

is a chief or patriarch of Ibuno, and is greatly esteemed by the people; a typical fisherman, his hard and horny hands testifying of honest labour. An old man of commanding appearance, with a free, open, and kindly countenance, he answers to the Bible description—"honest and of good report."

He was

FRIENDLY TO THE MISSIONARIES

and attentive to their message, and into his simple and kindly heart the truth seemed to have a ready entrance. During the second year of the mission he put away his

HOUSEHOLD GODS,

and outwardly reformed his ways. He prayed

regularly night and morning, and was in earnest about eternal things. The following year he would have been baptized, but his

FAVOURITE WIFE

was opposed to the Gospel and to the "new fashion." He was urged to put away his second wife and be baptized, not waiting for the other to become a Christian.

He would not do this unless his first wife was willing ; but she remained obdurate.

Some time after she took ill with a very painful disease, and Okana did everything in his power for her. Even medicine was procured from Old Calabar at his request, but she remained a

HELPLESS INVALID.

Other members of his household became sick ; one of his children died ; and, to crown all, his fishing did not prosper.

He came to the Mission House with his tale of sorrow :—"All his money had gone for medicine ;

FISH HAD CEASED

to enter his nets ; soon his children would be starving ; and the Abia-Ibök (medicine-man) had told him that all this was because he had forsaken the

GODS OF HIS FATHERS,

and that until he made a sacrifice to them no fish would enter his nets. He had come to the

conclusion that as the missionary's God would not help him he would

RETURN TO HIS OLD GODS ;

but he had come to lay his case before the missionary before making his sacrifice."

The missionary tried to console him, pointing him to the Scriptures, and showing him how God dealt with Job in his affliction, and he went away, resolved to cling to Jehovah.

OKANA'S AFFLICTION

continued, and often he himself would be laid aside with rheumatism. Just before Mr. Bill left he came again with his tale of woe. His conscience was ill at ease because he had not been baptized ; but how could he now ? The wife he had wished to marry, and the mother of all his children, was a helpless invalid, and if he was to be baptised he must

PUT HIS OTHER WIFE AWAY.

Who, then, would cook his food, and look after his home and children ? After a long talk, no solution of the difficulty seemed possible, and they parted, to pray that God might guide him and make his way plain.



General Results.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

[] After eight years' labour 81 persons have been baptized, and there is now, in 1896, a church with

A NATIVE MEMBERSHIP OF 65,

gathered out from among the heathen around. Some have died rejoicing in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection. Some are now members of the Church at Old Calabar, and only four have been removed from the Church roll by discipline. The Christians at Ibuno are very much as are converted men at home; some are bright and shining lights, their faith and obedience plainly seen by all, while to others the voice of self and the world speaks more loudly than the voice of their Lord.

The Mission is under a deep debt of obligation to the

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,

whose missionaries labour at Old Calabar, from whom we have procured Bibles, Testaments, Gospels, Scripture portions, and books in the Efik language. These have been translated by members of this Mission, and have been supplied to us on most favourable terms. No doubt this has to some extent accounted for the rapid and steady advance of the Qua Iboe Mission.

TO THOUSANDS OF HEATHEN

the Gospel has been preached; these have heard the joyful news and been brought under its influence.

SYNOPSIS OF SERVICES.

Sunday—Two services at Qua Iboe.

„ One each at Impanek, Ibuut Inyan, and Okat.

„ Sunday school at Ibuno.

Week days—Day schools at Ibuno, Impanek, and Okat.

„ Court-yard services in Ubarekan (except Friday and Saturday).

Tuesday—Inquirers' class.

Wednesday—Class for Church members.

Thursday—Inquirers' class.

Friday—Prayer meeting in church.

Saturday—Cottage meeting in Mission Town.

Constant *itineration* from Okat.

THREE NATIVE TEACHERS

have been trained, and are busy at work, and there is material for many more in preparation.

AN INDUSTRIAL BRANCH

has been established, a steam saw mill has been erected, and is at work. Nine boys are in training as carpenters. A church, teacher's house, industrial building, and new station at Okat have been erected, also coffee planting commenced.

The effect produced by the preaching of the Gospel and this industrial work upon the social



NEW MISSION HOUSE, OKAT.

condition of the natives, both Christian and heathen, has been most marked, and the missionaries feel that the time and effort given to any of these branches has not been in vain. Much of this work has been necessary in order to provide

HEALTHY AND COMFORTABLE RESIDENCES for the missionaries in such a hot and unhealthy climate, and even this, as an object lesson, has not been lost upon the natives. It has been the means of awakening in them desires after a higher and better state of things than had primarily existed. They are beginning to

DRESS MORE DECENTLY and comfortably, and there has been a vast improvement in their outward appearance.

The hovels in which they lived when the Mission was first started have been in many instances discarded for better dwellings, mats and palm leaf giving place to

MUD AND WATTLE, and even a step in advance of this has been taken by Chief Egbo Egbo, who has given orders for the building of a

WOODEN AND IRON HOUSE, the wood is being prepared by the industrial branch, and the iron for the roof has been ordered from England, through the trading firm in Qua Iboe.

All this has been taken cognisance of by the heathen around, who recognise in it the

ELEVATING POWER OF THE GOSPEL,

and this is a sermon that preaches loudly, and preaches to them all the day long ; but best of all, we know this outward change is only the visible manifestation of the greater and invisible, but no less real change that has been wrought in the hearts of the Ibuno people.

The missionaries have entered into this work with a spirit of the greatest devotion, and have imbued all of it with the

SPIRIT OF JESUS,

and by them it has been recognised as true and holy service for their Lord and Master.

THE MEDICAL WORK

has also been one of the most important and useful departments. All of the missionaries and their wives have had more or less training in medicine, and this has been of the utmost service to them. They have been most successful in their treatment of both surgical and medical cases, which has given them much influence with the people of the whole district.

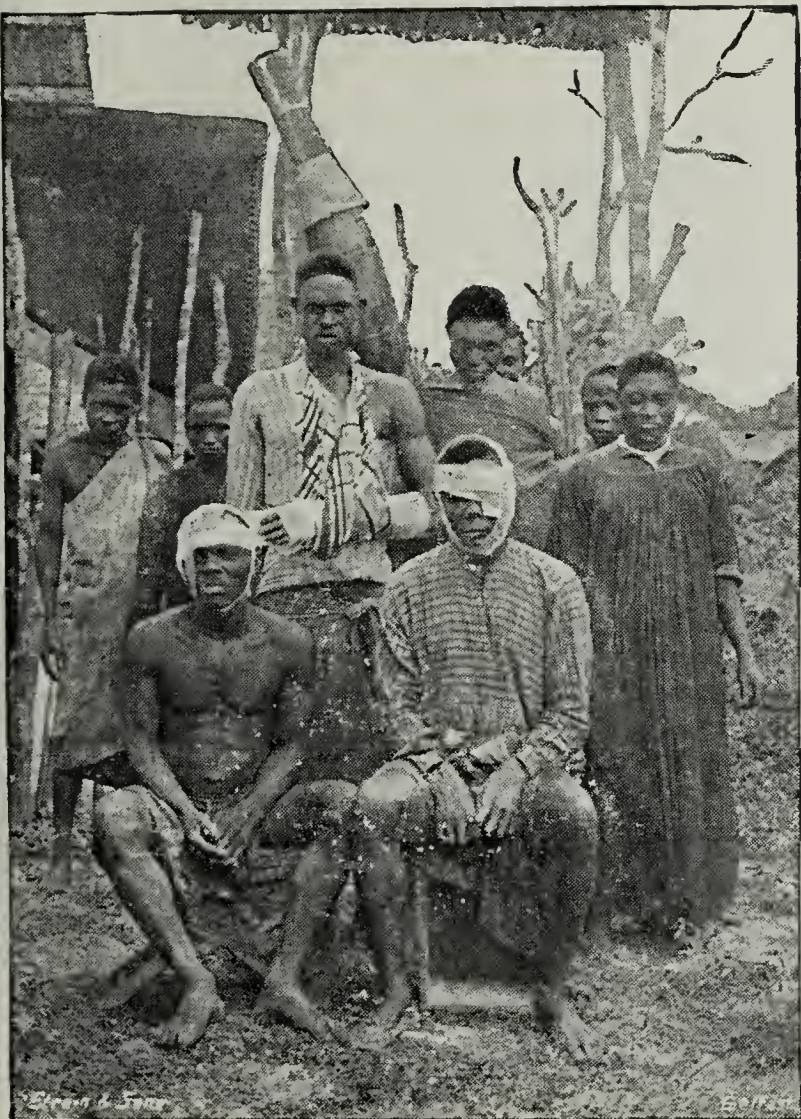
The horrible practices of murder on charges of

WITCHCRAFT,

so common in all parts of Africa, and of putting to death

TWIN CHILDREN,

have been abolished at Ibuno. The Protectorate Government has recently passed a law making these offences penal, but except at Ibuno they have found their prevention impossible.



OUT-DOOR PATIENTS.

We have great cause for thankfulness to God that the

HEALTH OF THE MISSIONARIES

has been so wonderfully preserved, and that during all these years no breach has been made by death in the ranks of our workers.

Pressing Needs.

Much has been done, but we have only yet touched the fringe of the

500,000

heathen in the district. Our pressing needs in the near future are a

NEW MISSION HOUSE AT IBUNO.

The present one is much too small, and is not situated in the most central position, and the stress of weather has been telling on the old house. Preparations have been made to commence the work of building a new one.

A HOME FOR THE BOYS

in the industrial branch is also urgently needed.

Some kind friends in Belfast have undertaken the building, with their own hands, of

A STEAM LAUNCH,

which will be of immense service, and will aid much in the itinerating work amongst the towns up the river. The boat is being built in the yard of the Duncrue Street Flour Mills, on a portion of ground kindly lent for this purpose.



OKAT SCHOOL-HOUSE.

More labourers are needed to thoroughly man the existing stations and to open others. Offers of service have come from

QUALIFIED WORKERS,

anxious to proceed to the field ; native helpers are also required ; but funds are necessary if we would press forward into the unoccupied fields. How many there are at home who feel the needs of the perishing, but whose way is closed to go abroad, who might be represented by a native helper in Qua Iboe. The sum required is not large, and already *three* busy Belfast merchants have their representatives in this corner of dark Africa.

As a

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

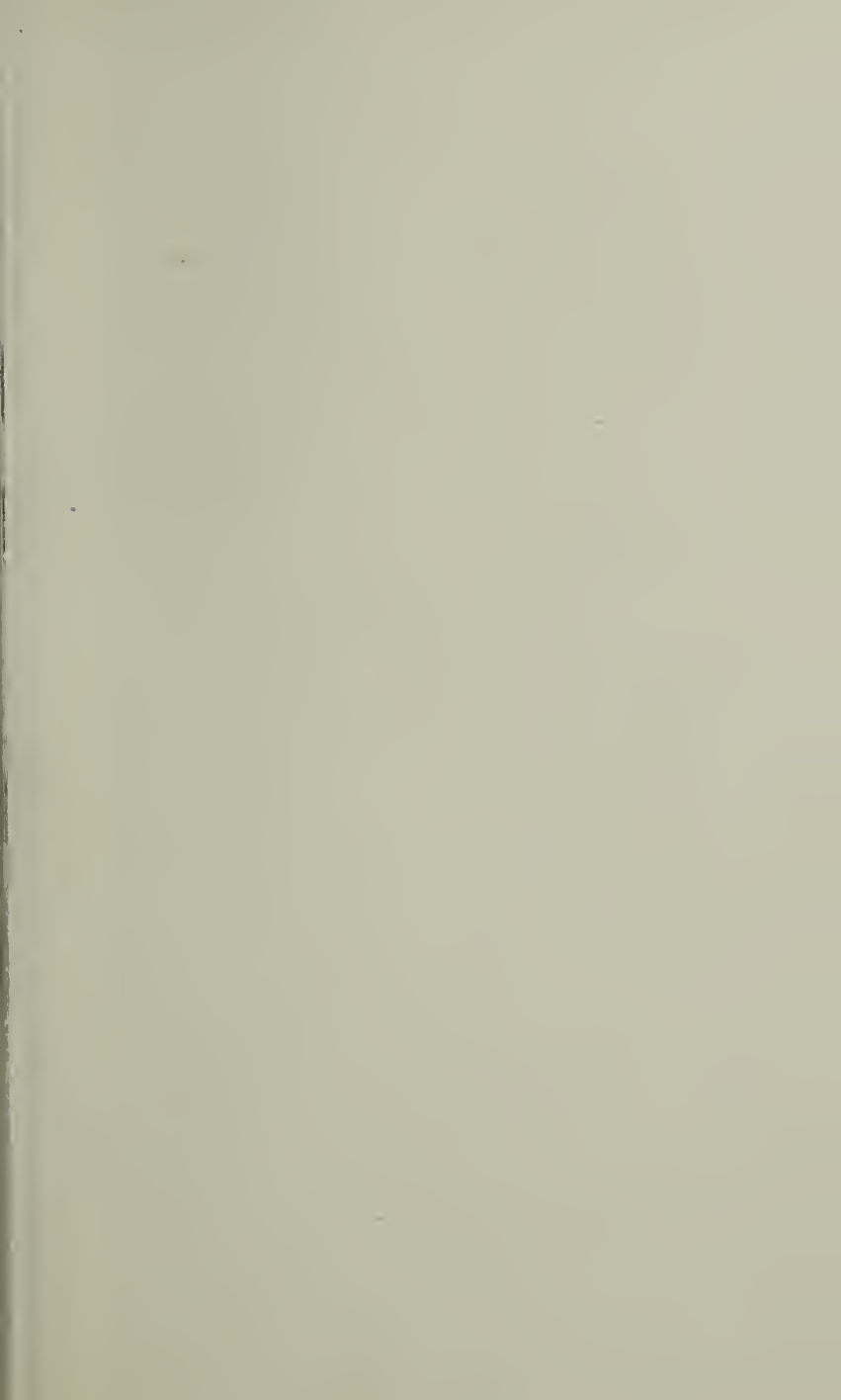
in all this work we take for our motto a promise from God's own Book, which we print in Efik.

Ethiopia eyesöp edi edinö Abasi

ubök esie.

“Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God.”

For the fulfilment of this promise we work and wait ; to this end we seek your co-operation as we strive to carry the joyful news to these joyless peoples, who but for the labours of our representatives would be unevangelised.





Copies of this Booklet may
be had from the Hon. Secs.
for 1/- per dozen post free.

